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WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU ANNOUNCES BEST PRACTICES GUIDE FOR AVOIDING INTERFERENCE BETWEEN PUBLIC SAFETY AND COMMERCIAL WIRELESS 800 MHZ COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau (Bureau) today announced the availability of A *Best Practices Guide ("Guide")* that can be used to identify and alleviate radio interference between public safety and commercial mobile radio service (CMRS) systems in the 800 MHz band. It is intended to help prevent or mitigate interference to public safety communications systems that provide critical safety-of-life communications services from FCC-compliant CMRS operations.

The *Guide* was compiled by a working group of subject matter experts from the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials-International, Inc. (APCO); the Cellular Telecommunications & Internet Association (CTIA); Motorola, Inc. (Motorola), a manufacturer of both commercial and public safety radio systems; Nextel Communications, Inc. (Nextel), an enhanced Specialized Mobile Radio (SMR) provider in the 800 MHz band; and the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN), representing local, state and federal government public safety users.

The *Guide* describes the types and causes of such interference and provides information that may enable the affected parties to reduce or even eliminate the interference. It also offers guidance for future system deployments that can prevent such interference through frequency planning, collocation or strategic location of public safety and CMRS base stations, system design improvements for either CMRS or public safety networks or both, equipment upgrades, frequency swaps and, if necessary, FCC rule changes or waivers.

"This is a positive step, and the Bureau is very pleased that the parties collaborated to make this happen," said Tom Sugrue, Chief of the Bureau. "They have developed a valuable resource for anyone working with telecommunications systems at 800 MHz."

The Bureau initiated the development of the *Guide* in April 2000, when it brought together representatives of CMRS providers and public safety communications officers to discuss the problem of interference between commercial mobile and public safety radio networks. The Bureau had received an increased number of reports of interference to public safety radio networks in the 800 MHz band apparently resulting from the operations of nearby CMRS systems, even though all providers were operating within the parameters of their FCC licenses. Anecdotal accounts appeared to correlate the increased interference with the recent expansion of 800 MHz CMRS systems -- particularly enhanced SMR systems and cellular networks - using digital technology and employing more intensive frequency reuse to serve an expanding customer base. It concluded, however, that

additional facts and analyses would be needed to conclusively establish the causes of this interference and to identify potential remedies.

Industry representatives were encouraged to develop definitive information as to the scope and severity of 800 MHz CMRS/public safety interference and to recommend mitigation techniques and solutions. The Commission emphasized that all parties affected by this phenomena - both commercial and public safety – needed to collaborate and share responsibility for identifying the causes of such interference, identifying mitigation alternatives, and developing joint planning and technical solutions for preventing interference. A number of participants formed a working group to pool their knowledge, experience and expertise.

The Guide is available at www.apcointl.org.

Additional technical background can be found at:
http://www.motorola.com/cgiss/NA/contact/Interference%20Technical%20Appendix.pdf
See also http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/publicsafety/

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